Preschool in Arizona

Preschool services for children ages 3-5 with disabilities

All children from 0-21 with delays or disabilities must be identified and evaluated in order to receive the services they need. These children are referred for screening and identification in a variety of ways: through a physician, Child Find, CPS, etc.

See A.R.S. 15-771 "Preschool programs for children with disabilities"
http://www.azleg.state.az.us/FormatDocument.asp?inDoc=/ars/15/00771.htm&Title=15&DocType=ARS

As the Homeless Liaison of a charter or public school district, the law requires that you make referrals, when appropriate. Please routinely inquire about preschool-age siblings. If the parent, guardian, or you have any reason to suspect the siblings might have special needs, developmental delays, etc. the family should be immediately referred to the appropriate agency for screening.

   o If the child is 0-3, they should be referred to the Arizona Early Intervention Program at DES.
      http://www.de.state.az.us/azeip

   **Arizona Early Intervention Program
   (DES/AzEIP)**

   3839 North Third Street, Suite 304
   Phoenix, Arizona 85012
   (602) 532-9960, toll free in Arizona (888) 439-5609
   Fax: (602) 200-9820

   AllAzEIP2@mail.de.state.az.us

   o If the child is 3-5, they should be referred to the public school district in which the family resides (School of Residency). Public school districts must provide students with Special Needs a Free & Appropriate Education beginning at age 3.

   o If you are not sure how or where to refer them, contact Rita Kenison, Child Find Coordinator, at (602) 364-4015.   http://www.ade.az.gov/ess/ChildFind/CfHome.asp

Preschool Programs for Children without disabilities.

Head Start Programs are made possible through Federal funding to local grantees, such as municipalities, government agencies, school districts, etc. Each of these agencies serves a geographical area. Head Start Programs (ages 3-5) are operating in most areas of the state, while Early Head Start Programs (ages 0-3) are more limited.

   To search for a Head Start Program in your area, go to
   http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/hsweb/index.jsp

Eligibility is based on income, but all students identified as "homeless" are automatically eligible; therefore, it is your job as Homeless Liaison to refer the preschool-aged children to these programs in your area.

Preschool in Arizona

Even Start is a Family Literacy Program funded by Federal dollars from USDOE and Arizona state funds for Early Childhood Education. It is authorized under the Arizona Family Literacy Program, as described in A.R.S. 15-901.01:
http://www.azleg.state.az.us/FormatDocument.asp?inDoc=/ars/15/00191-01.htm&Title=15&DocType=ARS

Even Start Grants are allocated to school districts and community-based organizations, with priority given to "un-served areas." There are currently 21 programs providing services for the most economically and educationally disadvantaged Arizona families at 65 sites.

There are 6 primary components to an Even Start Program:
1. Early Childhood Education
2. Adult Education
3. Parenting Education
4. Interactive Literacy Activities
5. Volunteering
6. Home Visits

 For contact information for an Even Start Program, go to
http://www.ade.az.gov/earlychildhood/preschool/programs/familyliteracy/FamilyClasses.pdf

Migrant Even Start is similar to Even Start, but is reserved for Migrant families. There are fewer of these programs.

State Early Childhood Block Grant Programs are comparable to Head Start, but they are state-funded. $19 million is available to school districts and charter schools through a formula grant.

Students who qualify for Free and Reduced Lunches are eligible. Since all Homeless students are automatically eligible for FRL, they are also automatically eligible for these Programs.

There are 3 types of programs available:
1. At Risk Preschool (usually for 4-year olds)
2. Full-day Kindergarten
3. Supplemental K-3 programs

State Block Grants are authorized by A.R.S. 15-1251. For more information:
http://www.azleg.state.az.us/FormatDocument.asp?inDoc=/ars/15/01251.htm&Title=15&DocType=ARS

For additional information, visit A.D.E'.s Early Childhood website at
http://www.ade.az.gov/earlychildhood/